

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1362

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 4115

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: NEW CANADIAN PRESIDENT OF THE TREASURY BOARD - BIO -
ROBERT KNIGHT ANDRAS

REF: OTTAWA 3705

1. A LIBERAL PARTY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT SINCE 1965, MR. ANDRAS SERVED AS MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (1968-71), AS MINISTER OF STATE FOR URBAN AFFAIRS (1971-72) AS MINISTER OF CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS (1972) AND AS MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION (1972-76).

2. AFTER GRADUATING FROM WESLEY COLLEGE IN WINNIPEG, ANDRAS SERVED WITH THE CANADIAN ARMY IN EUROPE DURING WORLD WAR II. HE HELD SEVERAL EXECUTIVE POSITIONS WITH THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY DURING 1946-55. IN 1958, AFTER SPENDING 3 YEARS AS MARKETING DIRECTOR FOR A CANADIAN SUBSIDIARY OF AN INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, ANDRAS WENT INTO BUSINESS FOR HIMSELF. HE IS NOW PRESIDENT OF FOUR FIRMS INVOLVED IN AUTOMOBILE SALES AND EQUIPMENT RENTALS.

3. AS MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION, ANDRAS WAS THE TARGET FOR A GREAT DEAL OF CRITICISM FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS AND SOME MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
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BECAUSE OF THE ENTRY INTO CANADA OF GEN DAN VAN QUANG,

THE ALLEGEDLY CORRUPT FORMER SECURITY ADVISER OF PRESIDENT THIEU. ANDRAS MANAGED TO RIDE OUT THIS STORM WITH PERIODIC STATEMENTS THAT QUANG WOULD BE SENT BACK TO VIETNAM, IF NECESSARY TO GET HIM OUT OF THE COUNTRY. QUANG IS STILL IN MONTREAL AND THE PROBLEM IS NOW FOR ANDRAS'S SUCCESSOR.

4. ANDRAS HAS A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW AT THE TREASURY BOARD. HIS PREDECESSOR, JEAN CHRETIEN, WAS KNOWN AS "DR. NO" AS HE SUPERVISED IMPLEMENTATION OF LIBERAL GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY MEASURES. CHRETIEN WAS FAR MORE THAN A MERE OBSTRUCTION, HOWEVER, AND IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE TOP HEAVYWEIGHTS IN THE CABINET. FROM ALL INDICATIONS, ANDRAS HAS THE CAPACITY FOR THE JOB AND, WITH HIS EXTENSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE, HE SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH COMETING DOLLAR AND CENTS PRIORITIES. WHETHER HE HAS THE TOUGHNESS AND DISCRETION TO BECOME ANOTHER, SUCCESSFUL "DR. NO", HOWEVER, REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

5. IN OCTOBER 1945 ANDRAS MARRIED THE FORMER FRANCES HUNT. THE COUPLE HAS A SON, ROBERT HUNT, AND A DAUGHTER, ANGELA KNIGHT.
ENDERS

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